

To meet the need for protecting sensitive and confidential information, including information protected by privacy laws, the County now supports sending and receiving encrypted e-mail, both with recipients inside and outside of the County e-mail system.


Please discuss with your Department's management when e-mail encryption should be used.

### First, some basics...

#### *What is required to send encrypted e-mail:*

- A G3 level license of Office 365 is required to **Send** encrypted email messages. If you require the use of encrypted e-mail and you do not have a G3 license, please contact your Department's IT support staff.

#### *How you can tell if you have a G3 level license of Office 365:*

- In Outlook Client
  - Click on **File**
  - Click on **Office Account**
  - If you have G3, you will see "**Microsoft Office ProPlus**" under Product Information
- In Outlook Web Access (OWA)
  - Click on the Settings icon 
  - Click on **Office 365 Settings**
  - Click on **Subscriptions**
  - If you have G3, you will see "**Office 365 Government E3**" under Licenses
- If you are unsure if you have G3, contact the IT Help Desk at 240-777-2828

#### *What happens if you try to send encrypted e-mail but you do not have G3:*

- The message will NOT be sent, and you will receive a notice that you do not have the required G3 license.

#### *How encrypted e-mail works:*

1. The sender composes a message that includes a flag / code indicating the message should be encrypted by including **#encrypt** anywhere in the subject of the message.
2. When sent, Office 365 processes the message and encrypts the message if it has **#encrypt** in the subject and the sender has a G3 license.
3. The e-mail recipient(s) receives a message indicating that an encrypted e-mail has been addressed to them. The message includes the subject line of the encrypted e-mail and instructions to access the encrypted e-mail.
4. The recipient(s) accesses the encrypted message on the Office 365 Secure E-mail Portal.

### Sending an encrypted e-mail:

To encrypt a message, simply include **#encrypt** anywhere in the subject of the message.

**Note:** **#encrypt** is NOT case sensitive. Any combination of upper/lower case letters used will cause the message to be encrypted.

### Viewing an encrypted e-mail:

There are two methods for recipients to read an encrypted message.

- Using a Microsoft account or County account **Note:** anyone can create a free Microsoft account for their current personal e-mail address
- Using a One-time passcode

### To view an encrypted message using a Microsoft or County account

1. Open the **message.html** attachment in the encrypted e-mail message notification. (**Note:** you may be required to save the attachment before opening)
2. Select **Sign in**
3. You are automatically redirected to the Secure E-mail Portal. Sign in with a Microsoft account (**Note:** If you log in using your County account, remember to logon with UserID@montgomerycountymd.gov)
4. View encrypted message

**Note:** If the recipient does not have a Microsoft account, they can choose the option to create one associated with their existing e-mail address. (They will have to fill out a form and complete a verification step.) In order to view the encrypted message, the email address for the Microsoft account must match the address to which the encrypted message was sent.

**Tip:** If you are inactive for more than 15 minutes, you are automatically signed out of the Office 365 Secure E-mail Portal.

### To view an encrypted message using a One-Time Passcode

1. Open the **message.html** attachment in the encrypted e-mail message notification. (**Note:** you may be required to save the attachment before opening)
2. Select **Use a one-time passcode**
3. You are automatically redirected to the Secure E-mail Portal, and a second message is sent to the same e-mail address with the passcode.
4. Sign in to the encrypted e-mail portal with the passcode from the second e-mail.
5. View encrypted message

**Note:** The passcode e-mail message will come from **MicrosoftOffice365@messaging.microsoft.com**. The message will contain two numbers. The first is the reference code, which determines which encrypted email the passcode is for. The second is the actual passcode required to access the encrypted e-mail.

**Tip:** Each one-time passcode expires after 15 minutes. If that happens, or if you can't open the message for any reason, start over by opening the attachment again and requesting another passcode.

## **Encrypted e-mail FAQ's**

**Q. Do recipients of encrypted e-mail messages on the County e-mail system require a G3 level license?**

No. A G3 license is only required for users sending a new encrypted e-mail. All County users can reply to encrypted e-mails and the reply will also be encrypted.

**Q. How do I get a G3 license?**

G3 licenses are the responsibility of each Department. Ask your supervisor to work with your Departmental IT contact to order a G3 license.

**Q. Do external recipients require licenses or subscriptions?**

No, external recipients do not require any licenses or subscriptions to read or reply to encrypted messages.

**Q. Can I read the encrypted messages on mobile devices?**

Yes, you can view messages on Android and iOS by downloading the Office 365 Message Encryption (OME) Viewer apps from the Google Play store and the Apple App store. Open the HTML attachment in the OME Viewer app to open your encrypted message. For other mobile devices, you can open the HTML attachment as long as your e-mail client supports Form Post.

**Q. Are replies and forwarded messages encrypted?**

Yes. Responses continue to be encrypted throughout the duration of the thread.

**Q. Is it possible to revoke a message sent to a particular recipient?**

No. You can't revoke a message to a particular person after it's sent.

**Q. How can I test if I can send encrypted messages?**

Send a message with **#encrypt** in the subject to yourself. If you can send encrypted e-mails, then you will receive it encrypted.

**Q. Will the copy of my message in my Sent Items folder be encrypted?**

No. The copy of the message in your Sent Items folder will not be encrypted.

**Q. Can I send encrypted e-mail from OWA?**

Yes. Encryption works the same from Outlook and OWA, as long as you have a G3 license.

**Q. Can I send encrypted e-mail from my mobile device?**

Yes. Encryption works the same from a mobile device, as long as you have a G3 license.

**Q. Are attachments encrypted?**

Yes. All attachments to an encrypted e-mail are also encrypted.

**Q. Is there a way to create a shortcut to start a new message that needs to be encrypted?**

Yes. If you are using the desktop version of Outlook, you can create a Quick Step. A link to a video tutorial for creating the Quick Step can be found on the County's Office 365 information site:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/office365>

**Q. Who do I contact for additional assistance or to ask follow-up questions about e-mail encryption?**

Please contact the IT Help Desk at 240-777-2828, or via e-mail at [helpit@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:helpit@montgomerycountymd.gov)